

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-9 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 4 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter recited in canceled claim 4. Claims 8 and 9 are added. Claim 8 recites the subject matter of original claim 1, as well as the subject matter recited in original claims 5 and 6. Claim 9 depends from claim 8 and recites the subject matter of original claim 7. Thus, no new matter is added.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 4, 6 and 7, they being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants submit that the subject matter of allowable claim 4 is included in independent claim 1, therefore claims 1-3 and 5-7 are in condition for allowance.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102/103

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,708,316 to Ishida; claims 1 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,548,933 to Yasuhara et al. (Yasuhara); claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,594,813 to Umeda et al. (Umeda); and claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Umeda. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants assert that as independent claim 1 recites the subject matter of claim 4 found to be allowable over the applied references of record, that claims 1-3 and 5 are allowable over the applied references. Thus Applicants respectfully request the rejections of claims 1-3 and 5 be withdrawn.

III. New Claims

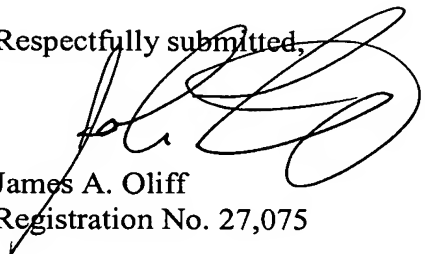
Applicants submit that claims 8 and 9 are allowable over the applied references of record as each of claims 8 and 9 recite subject matter found to be allowable over the applied references. For example, independent claim 8 recites the subject matter of original independent claim 1, as well as the subject matter recited in allowable claim 6. Additionally, claim 9 depends from new claim 8 and is therefore allowable for the reasons discussed above, as well as for the additional features recited therein which were found to be allowable as originally recited in claim 7.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-3 and 5-9 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


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Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: September 8, 2004

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